

U.S.: Summit invitation is open

WASHINGTON (R) — The White House said Monday President Ronald Reagan believed more meetings with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev would be useful and repeated that Mr. Reagan's invitation for a U.S. summit remains open. Spokesman Larry Speakes, commenting on a published report saying the Kremlin has made overtures for another summit, said there had been "no direct suggestions from the Soviets that indicate a desire to follow up on their commitment for a summit in the United States in 1987." But he added: "The president believes additional meetings can build on the major progress already achieved... The president's invitation for a U.S. summit remains open." Mr. Reagan had agreed with Mr. Gorbachev during a 1985 summit in Geneva to meet again in the United States in 1986 and hold a third summit in the Soviet Union in 1987. They did meet in October in Reykjavik, Iceland, for what was then billed as a "mini-summit" to prepare for a full-scale meeting, but their talks collapsed.

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King, Queen to start state visit to France on Jan. 12

PARIS (R) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor will make a state visit to France from Jan. 12 to 15, an official statement said Monday. French President Francois Mitterrand made an official visit to Jordan in July 1984.

Egypt to attend Damascus meeting

RIYADH (Petra) — Egypt will take part in a forthcoming meeting of the Arab Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture to be held in Damascus, Chairman of the Egyptian Federation of Chambers of Commerce Izzat Ghedan said on Monday. In a statement to the Saudi newspaper Al Sharq Al Awsat, Mr. Ghedan said the decision on Egypt's return to the federation was taken at an initiative by Saudi Arabia.

Saudi military team in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — A Saudi military delegation led by an adviser to Defence Minister Prince Sultan Ibn Abdul Aziz arrived in Cairo on Sunday for talks with Egyptian officials on military cooperation. Egypt's Middle East News Agency said the visit by the delegation, led by Sheikh Malek Abdul Hafiz Malek, would last for a week, but gave no details. Sheikh Malek's visit is the first known by a Saudi military official to Egypt since diplomatic relations were severed in 1979. Egypt, whose army is the Arab World's second biggest after Iraq's, has repeatedly stated its readiness to help Gulf Arab states fend off any spoiler from the Iran-Iraq war.

U.S. and Israel discuss Lavi project

TEL AVIV (AP) — U.S. Assistant Under-Secretary of Defence Dov Zalzheim met Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin Monday in an attempt to dissuade Israel from continuing the Lavi jet fighter project, a defence ministry official said. The two men discussed U.S. proposals for alternatives to the Lavi, but Mr. Rabin was not expected to give his answer before receiving the approval of the Israeli cabinet, said the official. Mr. Zalzheim said before arriving here Sunday that he would propose five alternatives to the Israeli-designed fighter: two versions of the F-16, the F-15, the European-made Harrier vertical take-off and landing jet and the F-18.

MacMillan buried

HORSTED KEYNES, England (AP) — Former Prime Minister Harold MacMillan, who led Britain's Conservative government for nearly seven years, was buried Monday in a quiet country churchyard. Mr. MacMillan, who died Dec. 29, about six weeks before his 93rd birthday, was laid to rest in a family plot at the Saxon church of St. Giles in Horsted Keynes, 50 kilometres south of London, beside his parents, his wife, Lady Dorothy.

INSIDE

- * Qadhafi says Libyan troops are in Chad on rescue mission, page 2
- * Ministerial committee reviews proposals to ease unemployment, page 3
- * 1987 could be the year for new Egypt-Arab links, page 4
- * Jordan — treasure house of history, page 5
- * Pele Cup gets under way with Brazilian victory, page 6
- * Soviets offer to launch satellites for the Third World, page 7
- * Solarz: U.S. will help defend democracy in the Philippines, page 8

Kuwait is confident of holding OIC summit as planned — Sabah

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah expressed confidence Monday that the Islamic summit scheduled to be held in Kuwait later this month would go ahead as planned.

The summit, set to start on Jan. 26, "will be held in Kuwait at the fixed time... and the quorum will be complete," he told reporters.

His remarks followed some calls for the summit of the 46-member Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to be postponed or its venue changed.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) newspaper Al Ittihad quoted Arab diplomats Monday as saying the conference might be postponed if efforts to persuade Iran to attend failed.

Tehran is against Kuwait as a site because of its support for Iraq in the war against Iran, Prime Minister Mir-Hossein Mousavi has said. Iran would prefer Pakistan as a venue.

Kuwait's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Saud Mohammad Al Otaibi said Monday after talks with Pakistan's ambassador to Kuwait that President Zia Ul Haq would attend the summit in Kuwait.

Sheikh Sabah gave no clue as to whether all OIC heads of state, including those of Syria and Iran, were expected to attend, or whether some might send envoys. Syria, along with Libya, backs Iran in its six-year-old war with Iraq, and diplomats have reported

The trip was seen by diplomats as a bid to persuade the bitter political and ideological foes to patch up differences and secure their attendance at the summit.

Sheikh Sabah said the foreign ministers of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) would meet in Riyadh on Tuesday to discuss economic cooperation with the European Community (EC).

The talks, which the minister said had been requested by Bahrain, were expected to review preparations for the summit, political sources said.

The GCC also includes Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE.

The sources said Sheikh Sabah was expected to brief colleagues on his latest diplomatic swing, and the ministers were also likely to review a visit to Morocco last week by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Ibn Abdul Aziz.

Moroccan newspapers,

Reagan undergoes 'routine' surgery

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President Ronald Reagan underwent what was described as "very routine" prostate surgery at Bethesda naval hospital on Monday, and his doctor said afterwards a preliminary examination "shows no suspicion of cancer."

The operation, to relieve what a spokesman described as "mild, recurring discomfort," was performed following a weekend physical examination that found no new evidence of cancer, which Mr. Reagan suffered in July 1985.

Colonel John Hutton, the presidential physician, issued a brief statement after surgery saying the operation "began at 8:15 (1315 GMT) and took about an hour. It was a very routine transurethral resection."

"The procedure went very smoothly. There was nothing out of the ordinary."

White House spokesman Larry Speakes also said a laboratory analysis of four small polyps removed from Mr. Reagan's colon on Sunday confirmed that the growths were benign.

Speakes told reporters that final laboratory results on the excised tissue would not be available until Tuesday.

Medical experts said there was a 10 per cent chance that doctors would find cancerous cells in the tissue removed from Mr. Reagan's urinary tract.

"Even if he were to have prostate cancer that required further treatment, the treatment for a man his age is fairly benign and not incapacitating," said Dr. Roger Weidenbaum, a Washington urologist.

During Monday's operation, a team of doctors from Minnesota's world-acclaimed Mayo Clinic cut away pieces of Mr. Reagan's enlarged prostate gland to alleviate urinary discomfort.

The operation is considered almost routine.

Mr. Reagan had a similar operation in 1967.

Speakes said Mr. Reagan, 75, was awake during the prostate surgery, being performed under a spinal anaesthetic that numbs the lower region of the body without rendering the patient unconscious.

including two pro-government publications, have called for the summit to be postponed because of rifts in the Islamic World.

Morocco's Foreign Minister

Abdul Latif Fliali flew to Riyadh Sunday night after carrying a message from King Hassan to Kuwait's semir, and met with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal.

Mr. Fliali said Morocco would send a delegation to the summit. But he did not say if King Hassan, who hosted the last summit of the 46-nation OIC in 1984, would attend.

Al Ittihad said Monday Iran had secretly asked for Egypt to be barred from the summit.

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Israeli naval siege lifted

B EIRUT (AP) — A passenger-laden ferry has docked in the port of Jounieh, the first to travel to Lebanon's rightist enclave since an Israeli frigate intercepted the vessel last week.

The Sunny Boat docked Sunday carrying 150 passengers from Larissa, Cyprus, immigration officials said. Its sister vessel, the Empress, arrived in Larissa from Jounieh with 600 passengers.

A government official said Monday that the Israeli blockade, imposed Friday, was lifted following "intensified diplomatic contacts with the governments of Cyprus and the United States."

The official spoke on condition of anonymity.

President Amin Gemayel on Saturday asked the United States to "exert pressure on Israel" to lift the blockade, said an official source, speaking on condition of not being identified further.

The request was made during a meeting at the suburban Baabda presidential palace between Mr. Gemayel and U.S. Ambassador John Kelly.

An Israeli frigate intercepted the Sunny Boat off the Lebanese coast on Friday while it was steaming from Larissa to Jounieh.

Captain Dimitris Vrakas, skipper of the 3,782-tonne ship, said the Israeli frigate told him by radio that the Larissa-Jounieh line was banned from "today."

The maritime line is the only safe link connecting the 1,000-square-kilometre mostly Christian enclave with the outside world.

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Kohl remark sparks row

BONN (R) — A political row erupted in West Germany Monday over an allegation by Dr. Kohl's centre-right coalition said the remark could seriously harm ties with East Germany and urged Dr. Kohl to withdraw it.

East Germany rejected the assertion, which Dr. Kohl made at a rally of his Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in Dortmund.

"We must never forget... that the political regime is holding 2,000 of our fellow countrymen over there in East Germany as political prisoners in prisons and concentration camps," Dr. Kohl said.

Senior CDU officials and government spokesman Friedhelm Ost defended Dr. Kohl, with Ost telling a news conference that the term concentration camp pre-dated the Nazi era and was commonly used by East German political prisoners themselves.

Opposition Social Democrats (SPD) and Greens condemned the claim as an attempt to win votes from right-wing nationalists by comparing East Berlin's

concentration camp to the Nazi's

concentration camp.

They fired assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades in the Dora shopping district, wounding at least eight people. The shooting began after an army troop carrier

collided with a car belonging to one of Mr. Gemayel's armed followers.

Sunday night gunmen in a speeding car shot dead two men standing by a coffee vendor's van in west Beirut's seaport Ramlet Al Baida district. Police said Atahmad Jaber, 30, and Mohammad Haidar, 20, died instantly in a hail of bullets.

"This is no longer a country, even a jungle is better than west Beirut," said Amal Zeidan, 25, who watched the shooting in horror from her apartment balcony.

The Shite Amal militia and the Druze-led Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) closed the 40-kilometre coast road to the southern port of Sidon for the second day running.

Police said the move was to stop any attempt to avenge the deaths of two PSP militiamen ambushed in the Amal-controlled district of Ouzai in southern Beirut on Saturday.

"At least 300 cars are backed up in Ouzai behind an Amal checkpoint," one driver from the south told Reuters after managing to talk his way through the militia controls.

The PSP had an armoured

troop carrier across the road at Jiyeh (25 kilometres south of Beirut) to prevent people from the south and the Shouf Mountains reaching Beirut," he said.

"It seems as if we always have to worry about one thing or another in this country," said housewife Sami Yassin. "If it's not street fighting or shelling, it's power or water cuts, shortages of bread or fuel. We get no peace."

The PSP and Amal say they are bound by an "alliance of blood" against Israel and right-wing forces, although they have clashed frequently on the streets of west

Israelis rocket Lebanese villages for second day running

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Israeli helicopter gunships attacked villages alleged to contain guerrilla strongholds in South Lebanon for a second straight day Monday after a roadside bomb blast killed four pro-Israel militiamen, police said.

The rocketing and strafing attacks covered the Litani River basin, which runs about 12 kilo metres north of the internationally recognised border with the Jewish state, a police report said.

The one-hour operation started at 10 a.m. and covered a nine-kilometre stretch of the Litani basin between the bridges of Khardeh and Qaqash near the inland market town of Nabatiyah, a terse police report said.

The raiding gunships fire "several phosphorus rockets that started fires along both ranks of the Litani and heavily strafed the whole region," the report said.

A casualty report from the second Israeli air attack in Lebanon this year was not immediately available, it added.

The attack came five hours after four militiamen of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) were killed and six others injured when a roadside bomb went off under their armored personnel carrier.

The bomb exploded at 5 a.m. near the village of Markaba, about two kilometres north of the border with Israel, police said.

Israeli military sources in Tel Aviv said two of the SLA militiamen were taken by helicopter to an Israeli hospital.

The casualties brought to 19 the number of SLA militiamen killed in attacks by Iranian-backed Shite militiamen against their positions in Israel's self-designated "security zone" over the past four days.

In apparent retaliation for attacks on the SLA, Israeli helicopter gunships on Sunday blasted alleged guerrilla strongholds of the Hezbollah, or party of god, in South Lebanon, killing at least three people and wounding eight.

Policemen said four gunships staged the Sunday raid against Hezbollah bases in the villages of Khirbet Selim and Qabrikha in the Golan-occupied zone of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Pro-Iranian zealots have recently intensified their attacks against the 1,500-strong SLA, which is backed by about 1,000 Israeli troops in the 10-to-16-kilometre "security zone."

The enclave was carved out when Israel withdrew the bulk of its occupation army from Lebanon in 1985.

Military sources in the southern port of Tyre told Reuters some 30 Israeli troop carriers and several jeeps moved into hills overlooking the village of Barachite, while other reinforcements deployed in hills overlooking the villages of Yater and Haddath.

People said the move was to stop any attempt to avenge the deaths of two PSP militiamen ambushed in the Amal-controlled district of Ouzai in southern Beirut on Saturday.

"At least 300 cars are backed up in Ouzai behind an Amal checkpoint," one driver from the south told Reuters after managing to talk his way through the militia controls.

"The latest tension was another burden for Beirut citizens weighed down by economic problems and a mounting crime wave."

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Qadhafi: Libya sent hundreds of troops in Chad rescue bid

PARIS (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi said in an interview published Monday that Libya has dispatched "a few hundred" soldiers to northern Chad aiming to rescue a group of technicians believed held prisoners there.

He told the French-wing daily *Liberation* that the troops had been sent to surround an area where some 20 technicians were thought to be held. He was prepared to use force if necessary to free them, he said.

Libya has previously denied having any troops in Chad or taking part in fighting between the forces of President Hissene Habre and rebels in the Libyan-backed Transitional Government of National Unity (GUNT), led by Acheikh Ibn Omar.

Also involved in the Chad conflict are forces loyal to former GUNT leader Goukouni Oueddei, who changed sides last October to join pro-Habre forces, in the latest switch to Chad's 20-year civil strife.

Mr. Oueddei himself was under Libyan guard in Tripoli but not a prisoner, Col. Qadhafi told the newspaper.

The interview was given last Thursday and at the weekend Chad accused Libya of launching air raids on targets in the north and south of the central African country, in an escalation of the civil war.

On Saturday, the Chad Military Command said Libyan planes bombed the towns of Fera and Zouar in the north after government troops recaptured them.

On Sunday, Chad said Libya staged an air raid south of the 16th

parallel, the so-called "red line" dividing Chad into a Libyan and rebel-controlled north and the south held by forces loyal to Mr. Habre.

A military statement said four Soviet-made MiG fighter planes raided Arada. Official sources said one aircraft also dropped a bomb on Oum Chalouba, site of a major government base.

The sources said one person was killed and five people, four of them women, were injured in the Arada bombing. Several houses were also burnt.

The raids were the first reported south of the 16th parallel since France accused Libya of having made another raid on the airport in the capital, N'Djamena, last February. Libya said Chadian rebels carried out the attack.

The reported weekend air raids, promptly denied by Tripoli, appeared to be the most serious military action south of the 16th parallel since France halted an offensive by Libyan-backed rebels in 1983, and they put increased pressure on France to intervene in its domestic problems.

But he said if French and U.S. involvement increased and if Mr. Habre's troops crossed north of the 16th parallel, Libya would come to the aid of GUNT leader Oumar.

Libyan television said Sunday night the French ambassador in Tripoli had received an urgent message from the government there, while the Libyan News Agency JANA accused France of "blatant intervention" in Chad.

Chadian government sources said authorities here believe the raid on civilians in Arada was a

provocation to France, while a Defence Ministry spokesman in Paris said France was evaluating the consequences of raids on Arada and Oum Chalouba, another town south of the red line.

France would decide whether the latest Libyan raids amounted to "a clear will to escalate the conflict" or a means for Libya "to save face" after it lost the key northern oasis town of Fada on Friday, the French Defence Ministry spokesman said.

Chad's government has reported substantial successes, saying that large numbers of Libyans have been killed, important quantities of military equipment seized and the Tibesti town of Zouar recaptured.

Libya denies any role in the fighting and there has been no independent confirmation of the reported Chadian successes.

The Chadian government sources said Mr. Habre would use the raids south of the parallel as a means of stepping up pressure on France to aid him to drive Libya out of Chad's desert north.

In Paris, French Budget Minister Alain Juppe said in a radio interview France might consider a warning strike against Libyan positions in northern Chad.

Military analysts said the United States would be keen to see France take on a more offensive role against Libya in its former colony.

Scores of people have been kidnapped during the last three months of fighting between Palestinians and Shi'ite Muslim militiamen at refugee camps in Beirut and South Lebanon.

Demobilised soldiers to rejoin their units immediately.

It quoted an announcement from the Armed Forces General Command as saying all those who failed to obey the order would be "legally brought to account and their demobilisation cancelled."

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It quoted an announcement from the Armed Forces General Command as saying all those who failed to obey the order would be "legally brought to account and their demobilisation cancelled."

The Libyan News Agency JANA has reported that the fortification operation is aimed at "turning this coast from east to west into an advanced line of death at any time and moment to respond (to) and deter any aggression attempt."

Police could not say whether Saba's abduction had a political or sectarian motive.

Scores of people have been kidnapped during the last three months of fighting between Palestinians and Shi'ite Muslim militiamen at refugee camps in Beirut and South Lebanon.

Demobilised soldiers to rejoin their units immediately.

NEWS IN BRIEF •

Queen to visit girls' training centre today

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor will today pay an inspection visit to the girls' vocational training centre in Marka centre. Her Majesty will review the training opportunities available to Jordanian families and prospects of involving them in women's prequalification projects as part of national development. On Wednesday, Queen Noor will chair a meeting at the Noor Al Hussein Foundation to discuss training programmes for women and local community development.

Admin committee gets 3 new members

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree has been issued approving the appointment of Interior Minister Rajai Dajani, Planning Minister Taher Kanaan and the Prime Minister's economic advisor Fayed Al Tarawehi as members of the Royal Committee for Administrative Development.

Rifai, mayor discuss Amman council

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Zaid Rifai received Amman Mayor Abdul Ra'uf Al Rawabdeh on Monday to discuss issues pertaining to the newly-established Greater Amman Municipal Council and means of improving and developing municipal services in the areas covered by the new municipality. Mr. Rawabdeh expressed appreciation and gratitude to the government for approving the formation of the Greater Amman Municipal Council and he expressed his hope that the council would be able to crystallise its working plan and provide the best services to citizens served by Amman Municipality.

Firms to prepare mosque designs

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and a consortium of local and Arab engineering offices on Monday signed an agreement for studies and design work on stage II of the King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein Mosque project. The JD 65,000 agreement entails preparing drawings for decoration work and for installing sound equipment. It also includes a study for a new minaret, radio and television studio and audiovisual equipment. The agreement was signed by Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Aziz Al Khayyat and representatives of the engineering offices.

Team prepares for investment seminar

AMMAN (Petra) — A special committee preparing for an investment seminar scheduled to be held in Kuwait next month held a meeting on Monday to discuss the projects which will be introduced to potential Kuwaiti investors. The meeting was chaired by Minister of Supply, Industry and Trade Rajai Mousher in the presence of Finance Minister Hanna Odeh. The event aims to brief Kuwaiti investors on investment opportunities in Jordan in the agricultural, industrial and tourism sectors.

Ambassador meets Omani ministers

MUSCAT (Petra) — Jordanian Ambassador to Oman Nayef Al Hadid on Monday held talks with the Omani ministers of education, youth and postal services and communications to review Jordanian-Omani cooperation in education and telecommunications.

Department forecasts snow in hilly areas

AMMAN (Petra) — The country will be affected by a very cold air mass accompanying a depression which is currently centred west of Cyprus and moving slowly to the south easterly region. Director General of the Meteorology Department Ali Abdalla said on Monday. Dr. Abdalla said the first cold air mass will result in strong winds and rainfall, starting in the western and northern areas but spreading gradually to all parts of the country. Dr. Abdalla added that a sharp drop in temperature and snow fall on areas over 800 metres high was expected.

Koran students receive prizes

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Aziz Al Khayyat on Monday presented winners of a contest for students of the Koran with their prizes. The contest was organised by the ministry on the occasion of the Prophet Mohammad's birthday which was celebrated on Nov. 13. The five winners will take part in an international contest for students of the Koran, due to be held in the holy city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia, on Jan. 14.

Ibn Tarif appointed to tourism company

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet has decided to appoint Minister of Communications Under Secretary Mansour Ibn Tarif as government representative to the Jordanian company for tourism and mineral resources' board of directors.

Rawdah housing complex in final stages of construction

By Meg Abu Hamdan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — With its contrasting features of blank forbidding walls along the main street and inviting and varied facades of the tall tower blocks, the Jordan Islamic Bank's huge housing project, "Rawdah" — now in its final stages of construction — is arousing much interest and speculation. Due to be completed by the beginning of 1987 at an estimated cost of JD 13.5 million, the project commands a fine position on 44 square dunums of land that stretch back from the University of Jordan road and reveals itself to be an almost self-contained city within a city that incorporates many traditional Arab ideas of living with more modern, universal ones.

Designed by the French based firm of architects, Barreth, in conjunction with the local office of Abukurah, the complex comprises 30 villas, seven high-rise residential towers consisting of 213 apartments, a mosque, a school, library, a civic hall and a shopping centre with underground parking for around 300 cars. Representing the firm of Barreth on site is Antonino Cascio, who explained that the concept behind the project was to return to the old Islamic idea of privacy, at the same time preserving the intimacy and completeness of a traditional Arab town with its souks and narrow streets that thread their way between high walled houses.

Walkways

Normally in a series of tower blocks, one would have to go all the way down one block to gain access to another. But in this complex, all the different levels in all the tower blocks are interlinked by the walkways. The feeling of continuity is further enhanced by the many open skylights. Situated over small squares onto which the apartments open, these skylights allow sunshine to penetrate to the very base of the blocks; the continually shifting patterns of light and shade creating that peaceful calm, peculiar only to high-walled courtyards. Via ramps, the walkways finally end on different parts of the roof in communal terraces with spectacular views across Amman.

Both apartments and villas are based on the same modular design and, large or small, they thus incorporate many of the same features while maintaining a

Labour ministries to oversee employment of Egyptian workers

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — No Egyptian labourers may be employed in the Kingdom unless they obtain prior approval from the Labour Ministries in both Jordan and Egypt, according to an announcement carried on Monday by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The announcement was made by Labour Minister Khaled Al Haj Hassan who was speaking during a meeting for directors of labour offices. The decision is retroactive as of Jan. 1, 1987.

During Monday's meeting, Mr. Haj Hassan said the step was in line with an agreement reached with Egyptian officials during his recent visit to Cairo to draw up measures for organising the employment of Egyptian workers in Jordan.

As a result of the talks, both countries decided to prepare lists of the skills required for the Jordanian and Egyptian labour markets and agreed that contracts for the employment of workers from either country should be concluded through their respective ministries of labour.

"I reiterate the importance of employing Jordanians and the need to open up new employment

labourers are required to produce a certificate providing that they are not wanted by Egyptian police departments or other official institutions, and a second certificate as evidence of their trade or profession and other papers required for issuing work permits in Jordan.

The minister told the directors that Egyptian workers employed in Jordan before Jan. 1 could continue in their present employment under the same terms they were hired, provided that their work was still needed.

However, Egyptian workers who arrived in Jordan before the official deadline was set and who still have not found jobs or obtained work permits would be given three months to rectify their situation.

Egyptian workers constitute the majority of Jordan's imported workforce and their number is roughly estimated at between 150 to 250,000.

On the issue of unemployment, Mr. Haj Hassan told the meeting that no foreign worker should be brought into Jordan unless it can be shown that his skills are not available in the local workforce.

The announcement was made on Monday by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

and job opportunities," said the minister, who has been trying to find immediate, short- and long-term solutions for unemployment since his appointment two years ago.

Mr. Haj Hassan also called on all Jordanian job-seekers, regardless of their qualifications and work experience, to register their names at the Kingdom's employment offices in a bid to help them search for employment opportunities.

Data on workforce

Referring to another scheme, Mr. Haj Hassan called on all employment offices to "urgently" provide the ministry with special forms which were earlier circulated amongst private business institutions requesting all information on the numbers of workers, their qualifications etc... to be fed into the ministry's computer system for analysis.

Two months ago, Mr. Haj Hassan announced the circulation of these forms and set the deadline for their completion as Dec. 30. The forms are designed to provide information to the government on the characteristics of the Jordanian labour force, the structure of the market and its needs.

Ministerial committee reviews proposals to ease unemployment

AMMAN (J.T.) — Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Wahhab Al Majali on Monday presided over a meeting of the ministerial committee in charge of remedying unemployment in Jordan and the committee studied proposals and suggestions put forward by sub-committees looking into the issue.

The proposals included a request that various institutions, such as community colleges, private schools, municipalities and industrial companies, appoint their own doctors in coordination with the Ministry of Health. The proposals also included provisions for establishing private clinics in villages and rural areas and for providing broader health insurance coverage through the private sector.

The committee also studied a proposal calling for supporting plans drawn up by the University of Jordan, including the proposed introduction of a diploma in maintenance in the various fields of engineering and another suggestion to give new graduates from the engineering faculty wider chances of appointment at various institutions and enforcing the legislation regarding the employment of Jordanian engineers in local contracting companies.

The committee also discussed the Vocational Training Corporation's (VTC) plan to qualify 5,000 students in various mechanical trades and the construction, electrical, hotel and agricultural sectors.

The Prime Minister's advisor Ali Al Hindawi and the committee members said that the committee will hold another meeting on Tuesday to continue discussions on special arrangements to remedy unemployment among graduates of universities and community colleges and to discuss the idea of establishing a company for marketing the labour force both locally and internationally.

Monday's meeting also followed up on several issues raised during the committee's meeting last week which tackled foreign labourers and pre-service training centres.

According to a well-placed official, the projected pre-service training programme is bound to absorb about 7,000 to 8,000 job-seekers in four-month courses

set to qualify them for new job vacancies.

According to the official, the government has already adopted certain mechanism under which local manpower will gradually replace foreign labourers, but it has not been implemented yet.

On unemployment amongst postgraduates, primarily holders of medicine and engineering faculties degrees, the official said the government was planning an expansion of medical and engineering services with a view to absorb more of the unemployed postgraduates.

The VTC was also called upon to accommodate approximately 5,000 undergraduate job-seekers within a scheme geared to rehabilitate and qualify the unskilled people to fill in the unemployment gap, the official said.

The aforementioned short-term solutions will, it is hoped, absorb some 13,000 unemployed people, that is nearly half of the official unemployment rate in the Kingdom, the official noted.

On the recent trends of workers lay-off by certain institutions, low payments and other job problems, the official said the government is putting as a top priority addressing unemployment and related issues and concrete resolutions will be worked out in the near future.

CAEU draws up working plan for '87

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) advisory committee has completed the 1987 working programme for the council's general secretariat. The programme includes a number of events, activities, symposiums and studies aimed at nurturing the impact of economic policies on Arab economic integration, the effect of the world economic recession on Arab economies as well as the role of joint Arab economic action.

A study on the goals and policies of regional development and their reflections on integrated development and Arab trade as well as the Arab Common Market will also be conducted within this programme.

The programme also includes an analytical study on the present conditions of Arab social and economic development, its major ups and downs, as well as the role of integrated Arab development in achieving self-reliance.

In the agricultural field, the programme includes a study on Arab agricultural coordination and integration and their roles in comprehensive planning for Arab agricultural development to achieve Arab food security.

Participants in the seminar, entitled "Amman... the city and the citizen," also stressed that local planning and consultancy engineering firms be given more say in the implementation of local projects.

Local firms are qualified and should be given total supervision over locally-implemented projects, or if this is not feasible that should at least have a share with foreign companies which are implementing projects in the Kingdom, the recommendation said.

Other recommendations adopted at the end of the seminar, which has been inaugurated by Her Majesty Queen Noor, covered means to improve the transport sector in the Kingdom and socio-political relations with the construction business in the country.

Seminar on architecture ends with suggestions on town, country planning

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A seven-day seminar on architecture and related issues wound up its meetings on Monday and issued several recommendations, including suggestions for drawing up a comprehensive planning strategy and setting up a central data and information bank to serve the Kingdom's engineering sector.

Participants in the seminar, entitled "Amman... the city and the citizen," also stressed that local planning and consultancy engineering firms be given more say in the implementation of local projects.

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The first paper reviewed the university's experience in social interaction in Jordan through its construction projects and the second dealt with the history of construction in Amman and socio-political relations with the construction business in the country.

the nuts and bolts, comments on the recently-introduced Greater Amman Municipality law and other topics related to architecture and town planning.

An exhibition of designs, sketches and models of roads and houses in Amman was held on the side lines of the seminar, held at the Professional Associations' Complex.

Engineer Raed Naber was awarded first prize at the end of the seminar for his design of a multi-storey recreational centre, imaginatively drawn to fit on a parking lot adjacent to the court premises in downtown Amman.

Working papers

During the last day of the seminar participants reviewed two working papers; one presented by Dr. Sarf Naser from the University of Jordan and the second by Dr. Taleb Al Rifai.

The first paper reviewed the university's experience in social interaction in Jordan through its construction projects and the second dealt with the history of construction in Amman and socio-political relations with the construction business in the country.

He explained that the ministry offered tenders for the centre's studies to a local and a foreign contracting company in accordance with a Cabinet decision issued last year. Under the decision, Jordanian contracting companies were given a greater opportunity to execute national construction projects.

He said that Israel's repressive measures designed to evict the Arab population from their homeland. The minister also spoke about Jordan's measures to help the Arab inhabitants maintain their steadfastness.

Mr. Dudin said that a just and comprehensive peace could be achieved in the region through an

international conference to be attended by all concerned parties and permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and on the basis of U.N. Resolution 242.

He said that Israel's repressive measures in the occupied territories are outrageous and violate all principles of human rights and international law. The Israeli authorities have confiscated more than half of the Arab land in the occupied territory and have also been depriving the Arab inhabitants of their means of living

as well as torturing Arab detainees and imposing curfews on Arab towns and villages, the minister said.

He also detailed the deteriorating economic conditions of the occupied territories and said that the Jordanian government has been providing assistance to the Arab inhabitants and is trying to improve their conditions. The government, he added, plans to provide further help through a projected five-year development plan in the occupied territories.

Designs for JD8m mail sorting centre underway

AMMAN (Petra) — The initial design layout for a JD 8 million electronic mail sorting centre to handle Jordan's international and local postal services has commenced, Mr. Mansour Ibn Tarif, under secretary at the Ministry of Communications, said on Monday.

Mr. Ibn Tarif said that the projected centre, on which work

will begin soon, will have a total built-up area of 12,000 square metres on an area of land owned by the Communications Ministry.

The building, to be situated near the Jordan radio and television station, will cover the Kingdom's mail sorting requirements for the coming 30 years, Mr. Ibn Tarif added.

He explained that the ministry offered tenders for the centre's studies to a local and a foreign contracting company in accordance with a Cabinet decision issued last year. Under the decision, Jordanian contracting companies were given a greater opportunity to execute national construction projects.

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Jordan Times
Tel: 667171-6

ANNOUNCEMENT
AVAILABILITY OF PRIVATE SECTOR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The Ministry of Planning announces the availability of short-term training opportunities in the U.S. for private sector personnel in a wide range of courses including General Management, Financial Management, Accountancy, Marketing, Production, Quality Control, Business Law, Personnel Administration, and/or other subjects related to the promotion and strengthening of Jordan's private sector with emphasis on manufacturing, agribusiness and management-related services.

Priority will be given to training which is consistent with the Jordan's Five-Year Plan objective of increasing the role of the private sector in Jordan's development process, e.g., increasing exports, creating jobs, and improving productivity and competitiveness.

Training is of a practical and short term nature, i.e., not to exceed 6 months, and may be with a wide variety of U.S. institutions and companies. This programme is being implemented in cooperation with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Applicants must be Jordanian citizens with adequate proficiency in English language and who are willing to participate in the cost of training through their own resources or those of their employers. Individuals and private sector institutions and companies interested in these training opportunities may write in English to the Ministry of Planning, Training Section, P.O. Box 555, Amman, Jordan.



Model of the Rawdah housing project

certain individuality in the layout. One of the most successful features is the double volume reception room which is overlooked by the family room on the second floor via open arch windows. The height and generally large dimensions of this room gives it an appropriate importance and atmosphere for its function

Jordan Times



Timely link

IT is good news that the Arab League has sent a representative to Saudi Arabia to conduct talks with the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) over ways to institutionalise their relationships. The talks between the two organisations began in Jeddah yesterday when an envoy of Secretary-General of the Arab League Chadi Klibi met with OIC chief Sharifuddin Pirzadeh.

The talks should come as no surprise in view of the organic link that is already existing between the two organisations. If there is any surprise, it comes from the fact that such talks had not started any earlier. The areas where the two organisations can cooperate and coordinate their efforts are endless, and it stands to reason therefore that the two sides should pool these efforts to solve their common problems and conflicts. We know that the Arab League has many working relationships with many other organisations — regional as well as international; and as such its impending new working relationship with the OIC would be a continuation of the functional path which the league has undertaken since its inception. Likewise the OIC has already established functional relationships with many regional and international organisations since its creation. The cycle of relationships must therefore be completed with the initiation of institutionalised contacts and cooperation.

In wishing this new emerging relationship every success, we also voice our concern and fear that it might not add much to the already incomplete functions of each organisation. The Arab League needs much overhauling and revamping in order to become an action-oriented regional organisation. It has evolved very little since it came into being and in order to be a helping hand to the OIC, it first has to be in a healthier state of affairs. Otherwise it would only add frustration and impotency to the OIC which is relatively young and inexperienced. The two sides can certainly complement one another in their endeavours; but to do so effectively, both must be strong and healthy in their own respective right. Before them are very critical and pressing issues, on top of which are the Iran-Iraq war, the Palestinian problem, general inter-Arab relations and inter-Islamic relations. How they deal with such problems and in what manner they address them is the real task that lies ahead.

The Islamic conference which is due to be held in Kuwait later this month offers a good opportunity to study and define this task. Let us hope that enough progress is made at the current Jeddah talks in order to present the Muslim and Arab leaders with something solid to build on.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Arab-Islamic interests

WE all are agreed on the fact that an Arab or Islamic summit meeting would be totally against the interest of the enemies of Arab and Muslim nations, but we should also reaffirm the fact that any obstruction laid in the path of convening such summits constitutes a hostile action to the Arab and Muslim nations. The forthcoming summit in Kuwait gains added significance because it is being held at a location close to the Gulf war, but such a summit is drawing hostile attitudes from the Iranian regime and other forces working against the interests of the Arab Nation. Therefore, we can say that any party that objects to the convening of the coming summit, or tries to hamper this important gathering, can only be classified as an enemy of the Arabs and Islam and harbours vindictive and evil designs directed against the Arab Nation and its higher interests. The coming summit is a golden chance for the Arab and Muslim leaders to discuss means of saving the nation from further sufferings and divisions and disputes that can only befool the common enemies. We hope that the majority of Muslim leaders will attend the summit regardless of those who opt to keep aloof with or without any given reason. If, on the other hand, the Kuwait summit fails to be convened then several more years might go by before another such important gathering could be arranged. This, if it happens, would do doubt lead to further breaches in Arab and Islamic solidarity and further weakening of Arab and Muslim ranks.

Al Dastour: Beware of Iranian moves

IRAN has been maintaining an information campaign directed against the forthcoming Islamic summit meeting due to be held in Kuwait this month. It has not satisfied itself by turning down an invitation to attend, but it has gone ahead with threats against the convening of such a summit in Kuwait, claiming that the country was not safe, being close to the field of operations of the on-going Gulf war. The Tehran regime has been threatening to wreck the meeting and urging other Islamic nations to refrain from attending. This sabotage activity is not intended against Kuwait alone but it is rather directed against the Muslim countries at large, because Tehran does not want Islamic countries to discuss Iran's aggression on Iraq or the Iranian regime's rejection of all mediation bids by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to end the conflict. Furthermore, Iran's sabotage is directed against Arab countries and their solidarity and support for Iraq in its endeavour to repel aggression. Iran followed the same policy against the Arab and Muslim nations during the 1982 non-aligned meeting in Baghdad and feels it duty to undermine solidarity among Third World countries which continue to strive for peace that is subversive by Iran and other forces hostile to the Arab and Muslim nations. We hope that all Iran's attempts will be doomed, and we warn other Arab countries against supporting Tehran's sabotage activities because such moves are detrimental to the Arab Nation.

Sawi Al Shaab: Iran makes an about-face

TEHRAN is nowadays busy with issuing threats to Islamic countries in general and Kuwait in particular, warning them against holding an Islamic summit meeting in Kuwait later this month. At the start of this campaign, Tehran claimed that Kuwait was not a secure and safe place for the high-level meeting, but later it changed its tune into issuing open threats for those planning to attend. The Iranians probably escalated their campaign against the coming summit when the Arab countries began a wide-spread campaign to rally support for it. But it is to be noted that Iran had announced its acceptance of a Kuwaiti invitation to take part in the summit before the recent devastating defeat it suffered in Shat Al Arab waterway, and this implies that its rejection of the summit emanated from the weak position in which Tehran has now found itself after the battle in which thousands of Iranians were slain. Had the latest Iranian offensive achieved the slightest success, we are sure that Tehran's position vis-a-vis the coming party would have been reversed. As the Iranian threats and diplomatic offensive against the coming summit continue and escalate, we hear reports of fresh massing of Iranian troops along the Iraqi border in a new attempt to penetrate Iraq's defence lines. Perhaps with the new move, the Iranians hope to impress the leaders of the Islamic nations and persuade them not to attend the summit.

1987 may be year of new Egypt-Arab links

By John Rogers
Reuter

CAIRO — A decade after then-President Anwar Sadat outraged the Arab World by travelling to occupied Jerusalem, 1987 is shaping up as a year in which Egypt may get back on official talking terms with most Arab states.

President Hosni Mubarak or top aides have recently met or exchanged messages with leaders of several countries which cut ties with Cairo in 1979 over its separate peace treaty with Israel and suspended it from the Arab League.

A common cause — support for Iraq in its six-year-old war with Iran — has been the main catalyst for better relations, especially with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.

Nearby diplomats here rule out a rapprochement only with Libya and Syria, because of their backing for Iran in the Gulf war and ingrained hostility towards Egypt.

A senior Egyptian official summed up the tone of messages sent to Cairo by other Arab leaders last year as: "We are not working against you and we feel your role is vital."

Relations have warmed noticeably with Saudi Arabia, which sent a consignment of wheat aid. In July, King Fahd gave his first interview to a Cairo newspaper for several years, saying: "Egypt is not even a second away from our hearts."

Kuwait sent a food shipment after police riots here last February, a short-lived national crisis, in what the official described as a "symbolic but significant gesture."

Western diplomats think it likely that Gulf states, despite reduced oil income, will give Egypt cash aid to help it with a current heavy debt repayment burden.

Egypt was readmitted last month to the Federation of Arab Chambers of Commerce and the Arab Football Federation.

"It's all warming up. It's like ping-pong diplomacy," said one diplomat, referring to China's 1970s strategy of using sporting contacts to develop ties with countries whose governments did not then recognise Peking.

Last September, Djibouti became the first Arab country since Jordan in 1984 to restore links with Cairo severed in 1979 by all Arab states except Oman, Somalia and Sudan.

Mubarak's attendance at the January 26 Kuwait summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), to which Egypt was readmitted in 1984 after a five-year suspension, will give his Arab friends an opportunity to welcome the most populous Arab state back to the fold.

Some Cairo diplomats believe the summit could feature a separate Arab gathering involving Egypt and those states ready to sit at the same table.

Such a meeting would bring the wheel of Middle East history almost full circle since Sadat brought the bulk of Arab opinion to make his November 1977 journey to Jerusalem and embark on the U.S.-brokered Camp David talks with the Israelis that led to the separate peace pact.

This policy was also a reason for his assassination in 1981.

The awkward relationship with Israel is a dominant feature of Egyptian policy. Most other Arab states, while not accepting it, appear to have got used to it.

"Apart from Syria and Libya, they are not really working against us in the peace process," a senior official told Reuters.

Egyptians reject suggestions that restoration of ties would mean Egypt's rejoining the Arab fold. They say they never left and Egypt is still the fulcrum of Arab power and culture.

The old Arab League headquarters here remains open and houses occasional conferences on Arab themes. Although non-Egyptian Arab bureaucrats work at its new base in Tunis, Cairo continues to pay the league's Egyptian staff.

Mubarak's speeches feature passages deplored the lack of Arab unity and criticising Libya and Syria for backing Iran.

But he avoids any suggestion that he is eager for restored relations with Arab states, and has said he does not want to embarrass other leaders by piling on the pressure.

"Egypt is not requesting anything from anybody," he said recently.

Egyptian officials say that what really matters is that personal, trade, cultural and economic ties with other Arab states, especially those in the Gulf, are growing without the formality of official diplomatic links — as is Egypt's military aid to Iraq.

Arab investment in Egypt has increased to about \$1 billion, Egypt's investment authority reports.

Most Arab League states maintain well-staffed missions here — "interest sections" operating under other nations' flags as embassies to all but tithe.

Egyptian officials detect a trend to more senior representation, and several missions, including those of Kuwait and Iraq, are headed by diplomats of ambassadorial rank.

Arab tourists flock to Cairo and some two million Egyptian labourers and professionals work in other Arab states, providing Egypt with its biggest source of hard currency.

Security Council is impotent in the face of defiance by many nations

By Nick Ludington
The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — Defiance of Security Council resolutions, which are legally binding, is routine and raises questions about the effectiveness of the council as the U.N.'s primary guarantor of peace.

Here, in question-and-answer form, is a look at the 15-member council.

Question: Who defies the resolutions?

Answer: Several states, chief among them Israel, South Africa and Iran.

Israel has ignored calls for withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the occupied Arab territories as well as other actions the council believed would help solve the Middle East conflict.

South Africa has defied resolutions demanding that it dismantle its system of racial separation and dozens of orders that it give independence to Namibia, also known as South-West Africa.

Iran refuses to cede negotiations to end the longest war since World War II despite six years of council calls for a political settlement of the Iran-Iraq conflict.

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, reporting to the General Assembly this fall, said

two needs must be met to save the credibility of the United Nations. The superpowers must overcome their distrust and cooperate within the Security Council, especially in settling regional issues, and all states must see it is in their interest to see that the Security Council resolutions are respected.

Q: Why doesn't this happen?

A: Neither the superpowers nor many other states are willing to heed demands of the council which clash with what they see as their national interests.

Israelis see a threat to their "national existence" in giving up the occupied territories or abandoning control of a "security zone" in southern Lebanon.

South Africa's white-run government sees a loss of comfortable lifestyles and a communist takeover if apartheid is abandoned and mineral-rich Namibia given independence.

Turkey insists its troops are needed to protect the Turkish Cypriot enclave from the Greek Cypriot majority.

France says New Caledonia is a part of France and the majority of inhabitants, including many European settlers, want to keep it that way.

Iran says the war with Iraq can only come when the Iraqi government is toppled.

Iran provided a recent example of council impotence when its U.N. ambassador, Rajaei Khorassani, refused to consult with U.S. Ambassador Vernon Walters, the council president during December, before an Iran-Iraq war debate. The council's presidency rotates among the members.

"As far as I know that's the first time in history that an ambassador has refused to consult with the council president," Walters said.

Q: Does the council do any good?

A: Yes. Several U.N. peacekeeping forces dispatched by the council have been successful buffers between states in conflict, for example between Syria and Israel on the Golan Heights and between Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

A U.N. force in southern Lebanon has performed important humanitarian tasks for the people in that embattled region.

Also, as former Indian Ambassador Natarajan Krishnan has noted, "it's all the small countries have" in making international appeals.

"Even focusing attention on a dangerous situation can sometimes help to keep it from getting worse," he said.



Vietnamese keep alert watch on mountainous border with China

By Peter Eng
The Associated Press

QUANG HAN, Vietnam — Major Noog Van Deng and the commander of Frontier Unit 171 shiver in the winter winds, watching for armed Chinese they say try to slip across the valleys of the rocky Phia Kho mountain into Vietnam.

If nothing happens, we are glad, not bored," Deng said, constantly rubbing his hands for warmth against near-freezing temperatures inside his thinly walled command post just under three kilometers from the mountainous border.

For the past eight years, Deng has been taking part in sporadic fighting along the spectacularly beautiful frontier.

A 17-day war in early 1979 left tens of thousands of casualties on both sides, a bitter legacy of mistrust, and a 1,300-kilometer border on constant military alert.

China, however, has yet to deliver what it calls its "second lesson" to the Vietnamese.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the Kampuchean resistance leader, has quoted Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping as saying Peking will not launch a second attack because it wants to show the world it is committed to the United Nations Charter and to the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

But Shaoak added, Deng said China would continue clashes all along the frontier to pressure the Vietnamese to withdraw from Kampuchea.

Vietnamese forces invaded Kampuchea after a series of border clashes with Kampuchean troops in 1977-78 and installed a radical communist regime the the country.

They are so many forms of psychological activities," Bo went on. "Little by little they try to infiltrate and have their own people working in our ranks."

In early December, the official army newspaper, Quan Doi Nhan Dan, said in a front-page article that life for soldiers on the border was difficult, with meals poor and warm clothing scarce. It charged that authorities were not doing enough to take care of the soldiers' families.

At Quang Han, Major Deng and his 100 men live in longhouses with thin walls made of mud and rice plants that keep out only the worst of the winter winds.

Deng said his soldiers serve three years without leave and earn a monthly salary of 600 dong (\$7.50) and up. That is equivalent to the pay of a mid-level civil servant in Hanoi.

Bo said the Chinese shelled Cao Bang 68 times in the first 10 months of 1986, compared to 75 times in all of 1985.



Asked if the soldiers had any complaints, he replied: "Our men consider the job an honourable one because it is the frontier."

James McGregor, director of the General Chamber of Commerce, said: "His will be a critical period of appraisal. We must not seriously erode business confidence."

Economicists said political uncertainties in the years ahead may lead management and skilled labour to leave.

Already there are signs that local business is taking out insurance over the future by diversifying overseas.

Last month a big property and trading firm, Hutchison Whampoa and an affiliate spent more than 2.7 billion dollars (\$345 million) on a major stake in Canada's Husky Oil.

The same group bought a 4.9 per cent stake in Pearson's, a British publishing and energy concern, in September.

Foreign companies, with much less of their wealth in Hong Kong, have moved in to fill part of the gap.

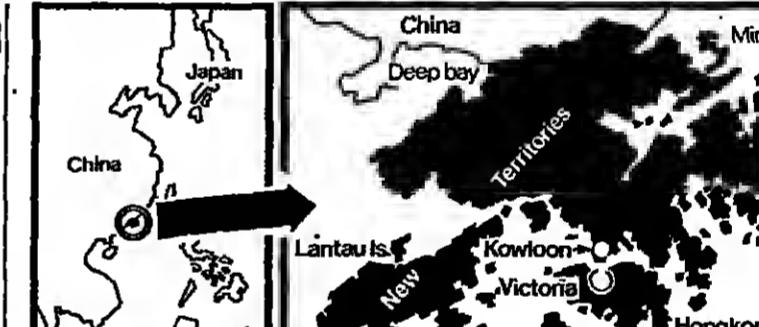
Australian entrepreneur Alan Bond spent 1.4 billion dollars (\$180 million) in October buying prime residential property from a leading local property firm, Hong Kong Land.

U.S.-based newspaper magnate Rupert Murdoch has relieved the biggest local bank, Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, of its controlling stake in the colony's main English-language daily, the South China Morning Post.

"We will see from now until 1990 a sort of musical chairs with local capitalists liquidating assets as a form of insurance," said Nicholas Kwan, senior analyst at consulting firm, Business International.

"Those sectors which require long-term investments with fixed assets will find it difficult," he said, adding that textiles and electronics, two of the territory's main exports, would be hurt.

- Britain to administer Hong Kong until 1997.
- Sino-British liaison group to help ensure smooth transfer of power.
- July 1, 1997: China takes over. Hong Kong to be autonomous (except foreign affairs and defence) for 50 years, with capitalism and 'lifestyle' preserved.



Hong Kong faces critical decade

By William Kazer
Reuter

HONG KONG — Hong Kong has withstood the initial shock of an uncertain political future but it faces new and critical tests in the decade leading to the transfer of power to China in 1997, business and economists say.

They told Reuters that growing debate over political reform could harm the British colony's humming economic machine and slow growth over the next 10 years.

Under a Sino-British agreement signed in 1984 Hong Kong will revert to Chinese rule on July 1, 1997

Jordan — treasure house of history

The following article appeared under the same headline in the Dec. 22, 1986, issue of the Saudi daily Arab News. The daily is published in Jeddah.

By Abdul Latif Al Hous

AMMAN— There is a phrase in French "embarras de choix" which means to be confused by the amount of things to choose from. Such a comment can be applied to Jordan. There is in Jordan such a wide range of things to see or to do, that one could easily become, "embarras de choix."

Let me try to explain this variety historically, to begin with.

Amman, the capital of Jordan has been shown by recent excavations to have been inhabited in the early Bronze Age — 2,000 to 3,000 years B.C. — but the museum at Jabal Qala'a, the Citadel, which is a must to visit, has artifacts found in Amman, dated 400,000 years ago. At Azraq, an oasis about an hour's drive east of Amman, hand axes and other stone tools found indicate that Stone Age bands of hunters lived in the region 100,000 years before that, possibly hunting the animals that came to drink at the waters of the enormous lake that was there until about 20,000 years ago when the area dried up and the deserts of Syria and Arabia were formed.

I find that this sort of history is beyond my grasp and I therefore look toward more understandable dates and occurrences. Well, here we have a treasure house in Jordan.

Amman as a name almost certainly comes from the Ammonites (or vice versa) who were in this part of Jordan, with the Edomites in the south and the Moabites on the hills to the east of the Dead Sea and to the south of the Ammonites, about 1280 B.C. This is some 600 years after Abraham arrived in the land of Canaan and 300 years after Jacob went to Egypt and Egypt took control of Palestine. In fact, the most interesting Crusader castle in the area, at Karak, was known as Krak des Moabites, or Kir-Moab, at times in its long history.

The Phoenician empire was about 1300 B.C., with Moses being shown the "promised land" from Mount Nebo, in the land of

Moab, about this time. All this and more is in Jordan. It is even possible to visit the historical sites in occupied West Bank, and the cities of occupied Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

A car ride of less than an hour from Amman brings one to Madaba where some of the finest mosaics preserved from the Byzantine empire are to be found. Six miles to the northwest of this ancient (Bronze Age) town in Israh Siyagh ("Siyagh" means monastery in aramaic), from where on a clear day one can see the Dead Sea and even the towers of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem; at night the lights of Jerusalem may clearly be seen.

Nearby but lower down the hill, and easy car ride, is the spring that still flows where Moses struck the rock with his staff and water gushed forth. When I visited the spring recently I asked to see the actual spot where the rock had been struck and was shown to a manhole cover which when lifted revealed a cistern. I was also led to a spot about 200 metres from the cistern where water flowed from the cliffside, albeit from an iron pipe. I drank from this water and found it sweet and refreshing.

Quite apart from such auspicious history, Jordan can look upon and show evidence of Nabataeans, Roman, Greek, Byzantine and many other incursions and influences, not to mention the Crusaders.

The Romans must have been particularly drawn to Amman. With its seven hills it must have seemed like a home away from home, having as well a climate similar to that of Rome. They built a large amphitheatre which is to this day to be seen and indeed is used, in downtown Amman. Called at that time Philadelphia, Amman was the headquarters of the Roman forces in Arabia. They extended Jerash (Gerasa of the Bible) from its Phoenician and Nabataean beginnings and in fact so beautiful a town was it that it was used as a holiday town for retired senior government employees of the Roman Empire.



The Khazanah at Petra

a rest and recuperation centre.

Today Jerash is the best-preserved and largest Roman and Byzantine ruin in the world, the sheer size and magnificence of which brings an involuntary gasp of admiration, and to see the wheel marks of chariots worn into the hard stone gives one an idea of how busy it must have been in those times. Today, largely due to the efforts of Queen Noor, Jerash is the scene of spectacular Son et Lumiere shows in a variety of languages. Jerash is only an hour from Amman by car.

Some fifty miles south of Madaba is Karak, where the walled town contains a Crusader castle of importance, built on the site of a previous Roman fort and later added to by Salah-al-Din (Saladin). This castle, with its maze of secret passages by use of which the defender could counterattack an enemy from almost any direction, lies on the King's Highway.

A shorter route is by way of the Desert Highway, but if time can be spared the journey between Madaba and Karak is of the most outstanding beauty. At times the road, with its sheer drops, can be awe-inspiring.

A further 100 miles or so to the south brings us to that "rose-red

city half as old as time" that the poet Dean Burdon wrote of after its rediscovery by the Swiss explorer John Burckhardt in the early 19th century. Petra has got to be high point of any visit to Jordan and needs a whole day or more to appreciate it properly.

The only entrance to the canyon which contains the outstanding rock buildings carved into the rock by the Nabataeans, is by way of a narrow defile, called the "Siq." The Siq is in places so narrow and its walls so high one feels that they must meet overhead. The Siq is about two miles in length and although it is better to walk in order to best enjoy the carvings in the rocks through this passage, one can hire a horse for a small sum. These horses are quiet and the owner, usually a small boy, will accompany you in any case.

When one has convinced oneself that the defile must come to a dead end one is suddenly faced by the awe-inspiring facade of the Khazanah, the Treasury.

Reluctantly you will leave Petra and now for another change of pace. Aqaba is so close that that must be the next stop. Aqaba contains all the delights of a modern seaside resort. Sailing, boating, windsurfing, waterskiing and just plain swimming or

sunbathing are all here. Should your interests lie in snorkeling or diving then real delights await you. The waters of the Red Sea are so clear and possess such properties that more corals are to be found here than in any other part of the world. The fish are brightly coloured and abundant. The beaches are a delight and seafood is a gourmet's dream.

Drag yourself away from these pleasures and take a trip to the Wadi Rum. Here you can take a day trip, or longer, by camel, should you feel like camping beneath the stars in a Bedouin encampment sleeping in a bayt shaar, a goat hair tent. Should a camel not be to your liking, a four-wheel-drive vehicle can be hired together with a guide to explore the wonders of the desert and rocks where the legendary adventurer Lawrence, with the help of the Great Arab Revolt drove the Turks from the area that they had claimed as the Ottoman empire.

Incidentally, here in the hills that enclose the wadi, can easily be seen how the land was laid down beneath the sea during the Great Flood at the time of Noah.

You have not in any way exhausted the marvels of this truly varied country in such a relatively

small area. We have not even spoken about the desert castles of the Umayyads or of their hunting lodges such as Qasr A'mr with its startlingly lovely frescoes; the uncompleted Palace of Moshatta; the oasis of Azraq with its game reserve and bird sanctuary, and its own castle built by Aziz ed-din Aybaq in the early 13th century, on the ruins of Roman and Byzantine structures quite possibly, of the black basalt stone that is common to the area, and from which it takes its name. This castle was a favourite of Col. Lawrence and he used it as his headquarters when, with Sharif Hussein, he planned his final march on Damascus.

Further delights you must discover yourself. It is very easy to travel to Jordan from Saudi Arabia. Regular flights from Riyadh, Dhahran and Jeddah by Saudi and Royal Jordanian Airlines fly direct. But why not drive? The necessary papers are not difficult to obtain and to have a car in Jordan is of great benefit. If you do fly, however, I do recommend that you consider hiring a car, which can be done at quite reasonable rates, especially if you are prepared to join in the favourite sport of the country, haggling. It is such fun to bargain over a price. Do not believe the owner who will try to assure you that your efforts will bring him to the very brink of bankruptcy.



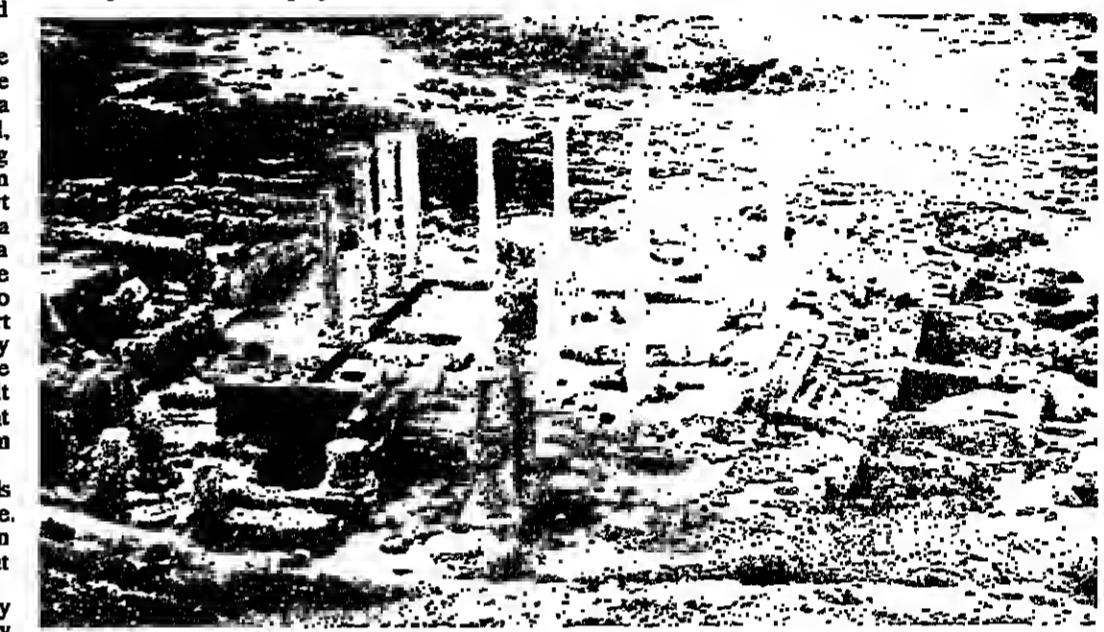
Byzantine mosaic at Madaba

Hotels in Amman range from four dinars a single room, six dinars a double, up to the Marriott at 25 dinars in single. (The Jordanian dinar is valued at about three dollars.) The answer is to shop around. I can personally recommend the Regency Palace at 25 dinars which is excellent, as well as the Neferit at 45 dinars a single and the Qasr at six dinars a

mentioned in this article, at very reasonable rates.

At Petra, Jerash, Karak and Maan and other main places there are government rest houses, as well as hotels.

Passes to travel to the occupied West Bank may be obtained from the Ministry of the Interior with remarkably little hassle, but allow two days for processing. You may not take your car into occupied Palestine and there are fairly tight rules as to when you may cross, usually only the morning before midday, but those details are easy to obtain.



The ancient Greco-Roman city of Jerash

Photographer rides under the rails in New York for shots

By Steve James
Reuter

NEW YORK — Bruce Davidson doesn't dodge bullets or risk his life to bring pictures of wars or world disasters to newspaper readers, but many might think he showed as much courage to produce his latest book of photographs.

He spent more than a year riding the New York subway.

"I felt I wanted to transform the vulgar beast into something beautiful," he said.

For that, Davidson went down into the world's most daunting underground railway system, which carries more than a million passengers a day and where more than 1,000 crimes are committed every month, from pickpocketing to rape and murder.

Many New Yorkers are so petrified of the noisy, sometimes antiquated, rat-infested and graffiti-daubed cars and tunnels that they would rather pay several times more than the \$1 flat fare for a cab than set foot in a subway car.

"The subway is the closest thing to a metaphor for these times. There's such a compression of people in the subway from all walks of life — it's a social equalizer," said Davidson.

"It's also probably one of the most inhumane places on the face of the earth. Anyone entering it is demoralized and dehumanized and immediately faced with their own mortality."

He recounted how one time, he saw a man enter a car smoking and sit next to a woman. A man told him smoking was banned but the smoker was abusive and refused to stop.

"Well, I had my camera ready, thinking something was going to happen, when suddenly the little old lady next to him reaches over, takes the cigarette out of his mouth, throws it on the floor and steps on it. All the men did nothing, including me." He missed the shot.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC NEWS GRAPHIC

American death row is growing rapidly a decade after capital penalty was restored

By Fred Bayles
The Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE, Texas — In the chilly midnight still, the state of Texas sent a lethal mix of poisons coursing through Michael Wayne Evans' veins.

Strapped to a specially designed table, Evans finished a brief statement and closed his eyes. "I'm sorry," he said, took several shallow breaths and died.

Evans died for brutal robbery-murder of a church pianist, a crime that took place a few months after Gary Gilmore's Jan. 17, 1977, death by firing squad ended a 10-year national moratorium on executions.

In the 10 years from Gilmore's controversial execution to Evans' quiet death in Dec., 66 men and one woman have been put to death.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1976 that states could restore the death penalty. The decision came a decade after the court had outlawed capital punishment.

In the years to come, death row is likely to become more entrenched, more routine and more efficient in the numbers it sends to the executioner.

Today, the U.S. death row population is four times as large as it was in 1977. Constitutional questions about capital punishment have become a body of law crowding court schedules.

Yet debate over the death penalty has quieted. Despite arguments about its fairness and effectiveness, 86 percent of the people questioned in a new Media General-Associated Press poll favoured the death penalty.

Asked if the death penalty was appropriate for crimes other than murder, 47 percent said yes, citing crimes such as rape, child molestation and drug dealing.

Even opponents believe capital punishment will remain the law of the land through the next generation.

"We live in a culture that is in a

very bad mood," said Henry Schwarzschild, head of the American Civil Liberties Union's capital punishment project. "People no longer want the death penalty as an answer to crime and violence. They want it because they think the ... (murderer) should die."

Death row's population is booming: in 1977, 460 people were under death sentence; today, 1,838 await execution.

The rate of growth, an average of 250 new prisoners a year, shows no signs of slowing.

"It's a constant cause of concern," said Richard Dugger, outgoing warden of Florida state prison in Starke. "We're constantly displacing other inmates to make room for them."

The supreme court has issued some two dozen death penalty edicts in the past 10 years, making it one of the premier constitutional issues of the decade.

Lower courts are swamped with death row appeals. Recently retired U.S. appeals court Judge John Godbold estimated each death penalty case his court reviewed equalled 30 other cases in terms of time and effort.

"The law in this area is very complicated," he said. "As soon as you lay one issue to rest, something crops up in other areas."

But there are signs the legal steps to execution are quickening.

Ten years ago 60 per cent of death row inmates had sentences overturned or reduced. Today, it is down to 40 per cent.

Major constitutional issues used for appeals are becoming scarce as the supreme court rules on more and more cases.

"As the body of case law continues to grow, we lose some issues and that cuts off avenues to pursue," said Tanya Coke, director of Research for the Defence Fund of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People.

In a major case now before the supreme court, McCleskey vs. Kemp, attorneys allege a racial bias in capital punishment, claiming the murder of white victims is more likely to result in a death sentence than the killing of blacks.

If the court agrees, it could halt capital punishment in the United States.

If the court rejects the argument, a major issue of appeal will disappear. Capital punishment opponents fear that would open a floodgate of executions.

Those fighting the death penalty have another problem. The rising number of cases and the high financial and emotional costs have created a shortage of attorneys willing to handle death row appeals. Since nearly all clients are indigent, attorneys must take on such appeals for free.

After some death row inmates in the state of Florida could not get representation, the state legislature last year created a state office of capital collateral representative to handle appeals.

A key supporter was Florida Attorney General Jim Smith, a death penalty supporter who argued the office was needed for Florida to continue executions.

The director of the new office, Larry Spaulding, said 10 staff attorneys averaged 80-hour weeks the first year to try to keep up with the death warrants.

"The problem is they gave us a 10-year backlog of cases," Spaulding said.

The hectic legal manoeuvring are far removed from those whose lives hang in the balance.

James "Doug" McCray has been on Florida's death row near 13 years for the rape and beating of a 67-year-old woman. McCray once won a new trial, only to see the decision overturned.

Through years of legal battles, he has met only one of three attorneys who represented him. He said inmates often learn of their cases from television.

Death row appeals are becoming scarce as the supreme court rules on more and more cases.

"As the body of case law continues to grow, we lose some issues and that cuts off avenues to pursue," said Tanya Coke, director of Research for the Defence Fund of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People.

"We live in a culture that is in a

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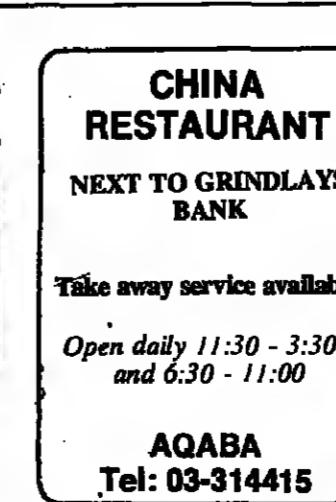
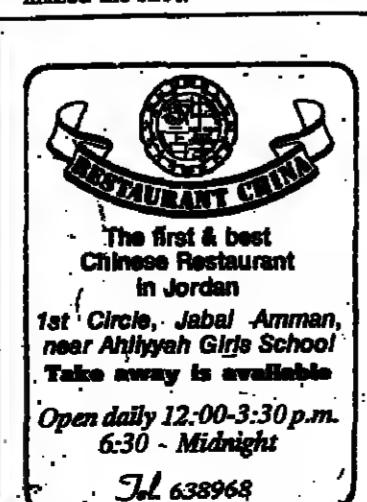
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Pele Cup gets under way with victory for Brazil

SAO PAULO, Brazil (AP) — Brazil, led by "soccer king" Pele, beat Italy 3-0 Sunday in the second game of the new Pele Cup tournament, organised for countries that have won the World Cup at least twice.

Under stormy skies, the soccer field soggy with water from heavy rains, soccer star Pele played before Brazilian crowds for the first time since 1974 and eager fans poured in to see him.

Earlier, West Germany and Argentina tied 1-1 in the opening game of the tournament with a sparse crowd watching in the Atlantic coffee port of Santos.

Argentina's Gonzalez, 39, scored the first goal of the game, heading the ball into the net in the 12th minute of the first half, while West Germany's Kremer, 37, tied the game with a neat shot in the last five minutes.

Brazil dominated the game against Italy.

Brazil's first point was made as Italian defenceman Lelli headed the ball into his team's net at 29 minutes in the first half.

Midfielder Rivelino headed the second goal into the net after a perfect pass from Marco Antonio 25 minutes into the second half and right wing Dario headed in a ball crossed to him by Teodomir at 36 minutes.

Lindqvist, other seeds advance in NSW Open

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — Ninth-seeded Catriona Lindqvist of Sweden defeated Eva Kralj of Switzerland 6-1, 7-6 Monday to advance to the second round of the \$150,000 New South Wales Open in women's tennis tournament.

Lindqvist was one of three seeded players to win on the opening day of the 56-draw Virginia Slims Series grass court event. The tournament, final grass court warm-up event for the Australian Open, continues through Sunday.

Britain's Jo Durie, the 13th seed, had to struggle for her 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 victory over 17-year-old Australian Michelle Jaggard, while 13th-seeded Australian Dianne Balestrat breezed past Gigi Fernandez of Puerto Rico 6-1, 7-6.

Gretchen Rush of the United States had the only upset, ousting her 14th seeded compatriot Marianne Wendt 6-0, 6-4. The top eight seeds, headed by

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Yugoslav wins ski jumping

INNSBRUCK, Austria (AP) — Yugoslavia's Primoz Ulaga made two jumps of 109.5 metres each to snatch victory from Austrian favourite Ernst Vettori in World Cup ski jumping here Sunday.

Vettori started after the first heat with a 113-metre jump that equalled Pavel Ploc's 1985 course record on Innsbruck's Isel Mountain Run and drew cheers from the partisan Austrian crowd.

Second-seeded Pam Shriver of the United States will meet British serve-and-volley specialist Sara Gomer in her second-round match after Gomer defeated Australian Amanda Dingwall 6-4, 3-6, 7-5.

Balestrat, who won this event in 1978, gave one of the most impressive performances of the day in defeating Fernandez, winner of the recent Singapore Open.

Balestrat was given a wild-card entry into the tournament after deciding to play following her third-round loss in Brisbane.

"I have been working very hard and I feel I played very well," the 30-year-old veteran said.

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- Handicraft courses (flower making, silk painting, ceramics).

Registration will last until Thursday 8 January and the courses will start on Saturday 10 January 1987.

For more information please contact the library of the centre, telephone 636445.

Kenyan team takes early lead in Paris-Dakar rally

EL GOLEA, Algeria (AP) — Kenyan rally veterans Shekar Mehta and Mike Doughty, driving one of the favoured Peugeot 205S, won the first desert stage of the Paris-Dakar Rally Sunday and moved to the top of the overall standings.

They covered the 159-mile stage from Ghardaia to Ouargla with 1 hour, 3 minutes and 16 seconds of penalty time, 3:16 ahead of the Mitsubishi Pajero of former winner Jean Da Silva of France.

British veterans Andrew Cowan and Johnstone Syer were third in another Pajero, 5:22 behind the leading Peugeot.

The stage, formally the third in the rally after the run from Paris, was designed to eliminate the poorly prepared and serve as a preview of what is facing more

than 480 competitors in cars and trucks and on motorcycles before they arrive in Dakar on Jan. 22.

It included gravel and rock strewn tracks, sand dunes, mountain gorges, soft sand, a stretch demanding accurate navigation, and a high-speed finish.

Italian Andrea Balestrieri won the motorcycle section on a Honda with penalties of 2:27:21, beating Italian Franco Picco; 2:15 behind, and France's Serge Bacou, 3:43 behind, both on Yamahas.

British veterans Andrew Cowan and Johnstone Syer were third in another Pajero, 5:22 behind the leading Peugeot.

The starting line-up for the Brazilian team was: Ado Toninho, Jaime, Djalma Dias, Marco Antonio, Teodoro, Carpejani, Rivelino, Cafuringa, Pele, and Edu.

Italy's starters were: Bordon, Maldera, Roversi, Cuccuredi, Facchetti, Marini, Sala, Beluci, Maraschi, Bonsegna and Poletti.

The starting line-up for West Germany was: Kleff, Kremer, Zembki, Russmann, Weber, Koppel, Geye, Gerdorf, Breitner, Fischer, Held.

The starting line-up for Argentina was: Buttice, Cortez, Paris, Mouzo, Botaniz, Brindisi, Berta (Babington), Gonzalez (Felman), Outes and Mas.

The starting line-up for Spain was: Kieff, Kremer, Zembki, Russmann, Weber, Koppel, Geye, Gerdorf, Breitner, Fischer, Held.

The starting line-up for Portugal was: Bordon, Maldera, Roversi, Cuccuredi, Facchetti, Marini, Sala, Beluci, Maraschi, Bonsegna and Poletti.

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One sterling	1.4780/90	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.3770/80	Canadian dollars
	2.9230/40	West German marks
	2.1730/40	Dutch guilders
	1.6193/6203	Swiss francs
	40.03/06	Belgian francs
	6.3575/3625	French francs
	1340/1341	Italian lire
	158.70/80	Japanese yen
	6.75/70	Swedish crowns
	7.3500/50	Norwegian crowns
	7.2830/80	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	399.20/399.70	U.S. dollars

LONDON STOCK MARKET

LONDON (R) — Share prices rallied Monday afternoon in line with an initial 24-point rise on Wall Street and at 1530 GMT the FTSE 100 share index was down 0.9 point at 1,680.2 after a low of 1,676.0 at 1204 GMT and an opening high of 1,683.2.

After starting strongly, due mainly to short-covering after the Christmas and new year holiday break, prices fell back for a short period on the back of weaker sterling, dealers said.

Shares showed little reaction to a newspaper opinion poll at the weekend which showed Britain's ruling Conservative Party only one point ahead of the opposition Labour Party.

The MORI poll came in the wake of a recent Gallup survey which gave the Conservatives a much larger 8.5 point lead over Labour. British Telecom shed 3p to 213 on the prospect of re-nationalisation if Labour win the next election.

The market, although unsettled, has to a large extent shown little reaction to press speculation over the current Department of Trade investigation into the affairs of Guinness.

Guinness shares stood at a late 294, a net 1p lower on Friday's close.

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 1987

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Make sure that you are alert and wide awake to the opportunities around you. It's not time to present them for approval to those high in the office.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) A fine day for getting in touch with good friends and stating your aims. Personal happiness important now.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Sit in the privacy of your study and make plans for the future with only your trusted advisers.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Contact persons with experience and find out how to make your personal life more rewarding and satisfying.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Anything of a political nature should be handled in a more up-to-date fashion. Be cautious.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Be wide awake to new changes that can prove profitable to you. Get your work organized more intelligently.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) If you use more modern methods, your daily routines will be easier to handle. Be happy with your mate.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) An outside partner can give you good suggestions that should be followed to your great advantage.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Add a worthwhile touch to whatever you are doing and this work becomes more valuable.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Get your talents working more efficiently and make a fine impression on another.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Give more attention to your home duties and please your family. Save personal wishes for later.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Study your correspondence from a different angle and get better results with it.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Make new arrangements where finances are concerned. Don't permit an old-time friend to monopolize your time.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY... he or she will be eager for knowledge, especially that of a modern nature, and will get into all kinds of activities since there is an open mind here. There are many talents here, and a college education is wise to attain since there can be much success.

USSR offers to launch Third World satellites

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov said Monday that Moscow was prepared to launch satellites for Third World countries on preferential terms as part of its drive to enter the lucrative commercial space market.

Mr. Ryzhkov, interviewed by the official news agency TASS, also pledged full respect for the secrecy of Western technology employed in satellites to be put into orbit by the Soviet Union.

"As it enters the international market of space technology and services, the Soviet Union, of course, must reckon with the laws of the market," Mr. Ryzhkov said.

"It is only natural that we expect to make some gains. At the same time, we shall be seeking to make the launch terms mutually advantageous, both to us and to the clients," he noted.

"When orbiting spacecraft for developing countries, the Soviet Union is prepared to grant them substantial discounts," he added. "That Moscow would insure the payloads."

Asked about possible objections over the transfer of Western space technology to the Soviet Union, Mr. Ryzhkov said foreign spacecraft would be exempted from customs inspection and could be moved to the launch site in sealed containers.

"Foreign specialists will be able to escort their spacecraft and watch it being transported and installed on a carrier rocket. It goes without saying that representatives of the client will be allowed into the cosmodrome," he said.

Mr. Ryzhkov said foreign devices could also be installed on Soviet spacecraft such as the Mir orbiting space station for scientific experimentation as part of a project for peaceful cooperation in space.

Moscow, which has demonstrated growing confidence in its space programme recently, set up a new trade body last year to handle orders for launching satellites for other countries.

In November, the Soviet Union offered to launch Thai communications satellites with full respect for any technological secrets involved. Moscow has also launched a series of Indian satellites in recent years.

Western analysts said the current Soviet drive to boost its participation in the commercial satellite market aimed to increase Moscow's hard currency earnings, which have fallen off due to the decline in world oil prices.

The analysts noted that the renewed offer came at a time when commercial satellite launches have been crippled by a series of setbacks in the U.S. and European space programmes.

"Foreign specialists will be able

Manila wants guarantees for expatriates in Mideast

MANILA (AP) — The Philippine government has announced new regulations governing the hiring of workers for jobs in Saudi Arabia to make sure Filipinos do not get stranded there in disputes with their employers.

The regulations, published Monday, require all prospective Saudi employers to submit corporate profiles of their companies to the Philippine ministry of labour and also verify the legality of any contracts.

Employment agencies which recruit Filipino workers must also submit letters of guarantee pledging that they will pay for the employees to return home and will secure exit visas for them if they face difficulties returning home.

The new regulations follow widespread complaints that Middle Eastern employers fail to honour promises regarding salary and working conditions and that workers who quit or lose their jobs face difficulties returning home.

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The union rejected a government offer to raise the academics' monthly cost of living allowances by up to 200 per cent and stuck to demands for a flat rate of 1,500 rupees (\$52.5) from the present 300 rupees (\$10.3).

It wanted the increase as an interim measure until April while the government addressed demands for a salary rise.

The union wants the minimum monthly salary of an assistant lecturer to be raised to 2,550 rupees (\$90) from 1,700 rupees (\$60) and that of the most senior professor to 6,500 rupees (\$228) from 4,525 rupees (\$159).

Mr. Jayaratne said universities have had problems attracting good teaching talent because of the salaries.

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Solarz: U.S. will help defend Filipino democracy if talks fail

Militant workers protest removal of minister

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — The United States will do everything it can to help defend democracy in the Philippines if peace talks with Communist rebels fail and fighting resumes, a senior U.S. congressman said Monday.

Democratic Representative Stephen Solarz, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, said he hoped the ceasefire and talks beginning Tuesday between the government and the rebel National Democratic Front (NDF) will bring permanent peace to the former U.S. colony.

The 60-day ceasefire began on Dec. 10.

Mr. Solarz, speaking at a news conference at the end of a 12-day visit, said, "but if the ceasefire should break down, I think the United States will do everything it possibly can to help the government of the Philippines defend democracy from those who would attempt to assail it."

Mr. Solarz, who met with President Corazon Aquino and other Philippine officials, denied charges by Communist rebel leaders that Mrs. Aquino's government was getting instructions from U.S. officials like him on how to negotiate with the rebels who have been fighting for 18 years.

"I certainly don't think there has been any interference with respect to the peace talks," he said. "This matter is for Filipinos to resolve. The strategy being adopted by the government is ... not an American strategy, it's a Filipino strategy..."

The congressman reiterated the U.S. government's support for the Philippine government.

"I think that if there is any single foreign policy issue on which there is genuinely bipartisan consensus both in the Congress and around the country, it is on the Philippines" since the

February revolt that ended the 20-year rule of Ferdinand Marcos, he said.

"There are few countries in the world which at this particular time are more important to the United States politically, ideologically, strategically and economically than the Philippines," he said. The United States has two major military bases in the island nation.

The Philippine government on Sunday accused Communist rebels contradicting themselves in preparations for a second round of peace talks set to begin this week.

The government made the accusations in a statement issued in response to comments from the NDF on the government's proposed agenda for the talks.

Discussions will focus on rural development, industrialisation and amnesty for guerrilla fighters.

In its comments, the NDF said it could find "no common ground" with the government agenda. It also called unacceptable the government's insistence that concessions be in line with provisions of the draft constitution, scheduled for a ratification plebiscite Feb. 2.

In its agenda, the NDF called for a transitional government to implement any settlement. The government has rejected that demand.

"The NDF response contradicts itself," said the government statement, issued by negotiator Teofilo Guingona. "The NDF wants parameters but when the government sets parameters, they want specifics. When the government sets specific to land reform and industrialisation, they want generalities."

Colombo rejects Tamil rebel preconditions

COLOMBO (Agencies) — The Sri Lankan government Monday rejected preconditions set by Tamil separatist guerrillas on talks aimed at finding a solution to the island's bloody ethnic war.

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali said: "The government is not prepared for any talks with preconditions to solve the ethnic problem."

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebel group on Saturday demanded the release of 3,000 Tamils detained by the government before talks could start.

The LTTE is the largest of the five main groups fighting government troops to set up an independent state for minority Tamils in the north and east of the island.

The group's spokesman Anton Balasingham told reporters in the south Indian city of Madras that the Colombo government should also repeat the prevention of terrorism act, resettle refugees and abolish surveillance zones.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency quoted Balasingham as saying that even then there could be no direct negotiations with Colombo. The Indian government, which has been acting as mediator, would have to be involved, he said.

Sri Lankan state radio quoted Mr. Athulathmudali as saying the government was prepared to find a solution through discussions but not under the preconditions set by the LTTE.

"The conditions indicate unwillingness on the part of Tamils to reach a political settlement," he said.

More than 4,300 people have

Students burn newspapers, pledge support for Deng

PEKING (R) — Students at Peking University Monday burned copies of official newspapers, which they accused of malicious and inaccurate reporting, but pledged their support for China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.

Several hundred students shouted and cheered as copies of the Peking Daily, the People's Daily and other papers went up in flames to the sound of firecrackers. Other students looked on from windows or the top of nearby walls.

The main culprit in the eyes of the students was the Peking Daily. "It has printed malicious and distorted news about our protests," one law student said. "We hate it. Today's action is a symbol of what we think."

He and other students accused the press of portraying students as being against Socialism and the Communist Party. The students said the papers were trying to drive a wedge between students and the public.

Investigators find arson behind Puerto Rican fire

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (R) — Investigators have concluded that a hotel fire that killed 96 people here on New Year's Eve was caused by arson, but there was no evidence the blaze was started by a bomb or other incendiary device.

Investigators announced their findings at a news conference Sunday beside the charred exterior wall of the hotel's gutted casino, as the death toll rose to 96.

The governor's press secretary, Danny Velez, said the additional victim was an American man who died of burns suffered in the fire which, in a matter of seconds, turned the casino of the Dupont Plaza Hotel into an inferno.

The findings were announced by Puerto Rican Attorney-General Hector Rivera Cruz.

Mr. Rivera said investigators were sure the blaze was deliberately set, but had been unable to find traces of a bomb, or other incendiary device, or to pinpoint blame.

The attack at the vacation home of Flavio Nunez of the ruling Aprista Party was among several weekend bombings blamed on leftist guerrillas in cities along Peru's northern coast, newspapers reported Sunday.

Mr. Nunez's wife, Gladys, a prosecuting attorney in the capital, was slightly injured by flying glass early Saturday when a small bomb was thrown into the bedroom of their home in the port

of Pimentel, 720 kilometres north of Lima, the government newspaper La Cronica said.

Mr. Nunez, who was reading in another room, ran to the bedroom of his three children, aged 6 to 12. There he found a second small bomb and threw it out the window, where it exploded without causing serious damage, La Cronica said.

Newspaper reports said police blamed the attacks on insurgents, but neither of Peru's major rebel groups, the pro-Cuba Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement and the Maoist-inspired Shining Path, claimed responsibility.

Local police did not answer the phone Sunday.

14 killed in U.S. train crash

BALTIMORE, Maryland (R) — Rescuers said Monday that 14 people were killed and 177 injured when a packed passenger train smashed into two freight engines near Baltimore at more than 160 kilometres per hour Sunday.

Lieutenant Daniel Kluge, a spokesman for the Baltimore County Emergency Operations, said rescuers were cut into the two remaining cars of Amtrak's New York-bound "Colonial," including the dining coach, but no more survivors were expected to be found.

Most of the 177 injured were taken in fleets of ambulances to Baltimore area hospitals and at least nine critically injured people were flown by helicopter to a special shock-trauma unit in Baltimore.

Nearly 200 rescue workers cut, pried and tore through the crumpled wreckage with cranes, bulldozers and torches during the night and called off their search for survivors early Monday, Lt. Kluge said.

Few officials and no journalists were allowed at the scene, 24 kilometres north of Baltimore.

Outgoing Maryland Governor Harry Hughes told reporters at the scene earlier that the accident was a "terrible, terrible tragedy."

Earlier, rescuers succeeded in freeing an unidentified woman from the twisted hulk of the third passenger car, but only after amputating one of her legs. The workers were unable to save her three-year-old son, who died pinned beside her.

Dr. Dan Mortain, regional medical director of the Baltimore metropolitan area's Emergency Medical Services, said he believed at least one passenger with a ruptured spleen owed his life to the swift rescue efforts.

They said more than 20 people were injured in stabbings and when police opened fire to disperse Hindus and Muslims who clashed in the old walled quarter of the city Sunday night.

The Hindustan Times newspaper said an indefinite curfew was clamped on the

1 killed, 8 hurt in new Karachi ethnic violence

KARACHI (R) — A man was stabbed to death and eight people were injured in a new outbreak of ethnic violence in Karachi, where 186 people died in communal rioting last month, police said Monday.

Troops were rushed to Liaquatabad, a volatile suburb of Pakistan's biggest city, after Sunday's incident and police used teargas to disperse angry crowds.

A group of young men from the Mohajir immigrant community dragged a bus driver out of his vehicle and stabbed him, before setting the vehicle on fire, the police said.

Doctors said the man was dead on arrival at hospital and a further eight people were treated for injuries from stabbings or stonings.

The disturbances spread to three other suburbs of the city of more than seven millions and a taxi, a car, three rickshaw cabs, and two mini-buses were set alight.

Witnesses said troops patrolled the riot-hit areas this morning, but no curfew was imposed.

An overnight curfew is still in force in Orangi town, scene of the



Elton John enters hospital for surgery

SYDNEY (R) — British rock star Elton John went into St. Vincent's Hospital here Monday for exploratory throat surgery. John, 40, who arrived in Sydney after watching the English cricket team play in a four-team tournament in Perth, told reporters it was too early to say whether his singing career would come to an end.

"I'm a bit concerned about it yes, but I don't know yet if I'll have to have an operation. That will be decided after tomorrow's biopsy," he said. Looking tired and drawn, John said he would not perform for at least a year. John collapsed on stage last month during a concert in Sydney at the end of a grueling 200-performance tour.

The provincial authorities were fiercely criticised for failing to prevent last month's widely-expected explosion and for being slow to react to it.

The provincial ministers resigned en masse last Thursday, but Chief Minister Ghous Ali Shah remained in office.

Some 300 Mohajir youths held a march Sunday from the court where the leader of the Mohajir Quami (national) Movement, Altaf Hussain, was making an appearance.

They were conflicting reports on the cause of the violence. One version blamed it on a quarrel which broke out between Hindu and Muslim groups taking part in the city's traditional sport of kite-flying.

Other sources said the trouble flared when a procession passing through the walled quarter was stoned.

Police impose curfew on Indian town after clashes

NEW DELHI (R) — An indefinite curfew has been clamped on parts of Ahmedabad in western India after clashes between Hindus and Muslims, police said Monday.

They said more than 20 people were injured in stabbings and when police opened fire to disperse Hindus and Muslims who clashed in the old walled quarter of the city Sunday night.

The Hindustan Times newspaper said an indefinite curfew was clamped on the

Moscow offers AWACS to New Delhi

NEW DELHI (R) — The Soviet Union has offered India Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) to counter the proposed supply of U.S.-made AWACS to Pakistan, but New Delhi may say no, an Indian news agency said Monday.

The United News of India (UNI) said the Indian Air Force was not in favour of the Soviet IL-76 tactical transport aircraft fitted with AWACS because it was not as sophisticated as the U.S. version.

The IL-76, codenamed, Mautsay by NATO, lacked several functions of the U.S. version, including the ability to pick out low-flying targets accurately, the news agency said.

UNI quoted unidentified defence experts as saying the Soviet offer could also be rejected because it would set back Indian efforts to produce its own AWACS version by 1990.

An Indian Defence Ministry spokesman was not immediately available for comment.

Reports of increased supplies of U.S.-made arms, including AWACS, to Pakistan have raised tensions between India and Pakistan. The two countries have fought three wars against each other since gaining independence from Britain in 1947.

The UNI report was published two days after a senior Indian opposition leader, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, warned that Pakistan would use its U.S.-supplied weapons against India and not

NASA begins burial of Challenger wreckage

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AP) — Needy a year after the Challenger explosion that killed seven astronauts, NASA is burying the wreckage of the space shuttle.

Starting Monday, the wreckage is to be lowered by crane 90 feet (27 metres) underground into two abandoned Minuteman missile silos 3.2 kilometres down the beach from where the shuttle was launched on Jan. 28.

A pair of 4,530-kilogramme concrete caps will be placed over the silos, sealing nearly 125 tonnes of twisted metal in unmarked tombs. The burial is expected to take about two months.

Those pieces and the harsciale-encrusted wreckage found later have been kept in a warehouse and makeshift hangar at Kennedy Space Center. Experts analysed and catalogued every nut and bolt.

Col. O'Connor came up with the idea of putting the debris in the silos, which are located at neighbouring Cape Canaveral air

force station and have stood empty since the Minuteman research programme ended in 1970.

Because the site is on a military base, it will be off limits to the public, officials said. There are no plans to put up a plaque marking the silos as Challenger's last resting place.

The task of cleaning the dark silos and storing the debris fell to about 15 NASA workers who view the burial as "just something that has to be done," said Project Director Elliot Kicklighter.

Much of the debris is to be stacked in equipment rooms from which it can be removed easily if engineers want to re-examine any part of it.

"Anything that anyone might need to be retrieved, they'll know where it's at," Kicklighter said.

Pieces that are too large to fit in the 12-foot (3.6 metre) diameter silos, such as the wing and sections of the external tank, will be cut up before burial.

Although the situation in outlying islands was not known.

The hurricane blew out to sea on Sunday leaving an estimated 1,000 people homeless in Rarotonga, the largest of the Cook Islands, a self-governing territory in free association with New Zealand. Almost 18,000 people live in the far-reaching chain.

New Zealand responded to the crisis by flying in an air force Hercules transport plane with emergency supplies and a team of army engineers to help restore power and water supplies.

The United States, Britain, France and Australia also pledged immediate financial assistance.

Australia's Ansett Airlines flew a Boeing 767 to Rarotonga on Sunday to collect up to 500 Australian and New Zealand tourists but some visitors decided to stay to help in the cleanup, said airline spokeswoman Keira Loucley.

New Zealander Rick Adams said that during the storm houses were demolished, the shopping centre destroyed and the hotel had coconuts flying through the roof.

The South Pacific hurricane season runs from October through March.

economy

It was disastrous.

"There was mud, rocks and coral scattered through the whole town. It was completely wiped out," he said.

Waterfront Commission General Manager Ioane Iro said it would take at least \$6.5 million to rebuild Rarotonga's only port, which was virtually destroyed by tidal waves.

Mr. Iro spoke to reporters as bulldozers began clearing corrugated iron warehouses twisted under the weight of tonnes of coral boulders swept onto the shore.

"I've never seen anything like it," he said. "The harbour looked like a washing machine. Boats were just simply lifted out of the water and onto the beach."

Australian Associated Press reported that the islands will have to rely on airborne supplies possibly for several weeks, although there are plans to offload cargo vessels out to sea and bring vital food and building supplies in by small boats.

The South Pacific hurricane season runs from October through March.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦K983 ♦KJ ♠A52 ♣Q983
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 2 ♣ Pass ?
What action do you bid now?
- Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦A98 ♦AJ1073 ♠A ♣KJ66
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 2 ♣ Pass ?
What action do you take?
- Q.3—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦Q98 ♦775 ♠A1062 ♣A876
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 2 ♣ Pass ?<